



News Release

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SBA Grants Will Fund 19 New Women's Business Centers, Continue Funding for 80 Existing Centers

Women's Centers Will Aid in the Development of Women-owned Businesses

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Small Business Administration today announced \$12 million in grant funding for 19 new Women's Business Centers (WBCs) and 80 existing WBCs, broadening the reach of business training and counseling to assist women to start, grow and expand their small businesses.

The \$12 million includes funding for the 19 new WBCs, continued funding for the 29 existing WBCs that are still in their first five years of funding and 51 older WBCs that were awarded sustainability grants. Each WBC is required to match a portion of the federal funds with private contributions.

WBCs are community-based and they are in nearly every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and American Samoa, serving a wide variety of economic environments including urban, suburban and rural. Each WBC tailors its services to meet the needs of the local area, and works to provide women business owners with long-term training, counseling and mentoring, as well as access to all of the SBA's programs and services.

The WBC program, established by Congress in 1988, is administered by the SBA's Office of Women's Business Ownership and promotes the growth of women-owned businesses through business training and technical assistance, and provides access to credit and capital, federal contracts, and international trade opportunities.

The new WBCs are located in the following cities: Wiscasset, Maine; Kenosha, Wis.; Seattle, Wash.; New York, N.Y.; Durant, Okla.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Greensburg, Pa.; Los Angeles, Calif.; Wilmington, Del.; San Antonio, Texas; San Luis Obispo, Calif.; Syracuse, N.Y.; Forest, Miss.; Newark, N.J.; Santa Ana, Calif.; Huntsville, Ala. (serving Northern Alabama counties); Mobile, Ala.; San Bernardino, Calif.; and Albuquerque, N.M.

With the addition of these 19 centers, women entrepreneurs now have 99 WBCs nationwide to help them start and grow their small businesses. The WBC program served more than 144,000 clients across the country last year, providing help with financial management, procurement training, marketing and technical assistance. WBCs also provide specialized programs that include mentoring in various languages, Internet training, issues facing displaced workers and rural home-based entrepreneurs.

For a complete list of all centers receiving grants, to find the location nearest to you and for additional information about the SBA's Women's Business Center program, visit online at

<http://www.onlinewbc.gov/wbc.pdf>.